



**Montgomery County, MD
Commission on People with Disabilities
Meeting Summary Minutes
May 11th, 2011**

Welcome and Approval of April Meeting Summary Minutes:

Trish Gallalee, Chair, convened the meeting. Paul Meyer, Commissioner, made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Mark Maxin, Commissioner, seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the April Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved.

Senior Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) and Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP): What People with Disabilities Need to Know Regarding Timeliness and Income Support Programs – Leta Blank, Program Director, University of Maryland Extension, Montgomery County, MD:

The [Senior Health Insurance Assistance Program \(SHIP\)](#) is a State and County funded program that assists Medicare beneficiaries, including those under 65 years of age, with understanding their health insurance benefits, bills and rights. Counselors can provide assistance with: Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage Program (Medicare Part D); Medicare supplements (Medigap Plans); assistance for disabled Medicare beneficiaries (under age 65); Medicare Advantage Plans (HMOs, preferred provider organizations); long term care insurance; Medical Assistance programs; assistance for low-income beneficiaries; assistance with denials, appeals and grievances; billing problems; and health care fraud and abuse. Services are confidential and provided free of charge.

The [Maryland Health Insurance Plan \(MHIP\)](#) is a state health insurance plan that provides coverage to Maryland residents who are unable to obtain health insurance due to a health condition or have recently lost group coverage. It provides discounted premiums and, in some cases, cost sharing to MHIP members with limited income. This plan will cover families as long as one family member has a health condition that prohibits them from obtaining individual insurance on the open market.

The SHIP contract is monitored by Montgomery County Aging and Disability Services. SHIP counselors also provide information on available Federal and State Income Support Programs and will assist individuals with obtaining Medicare Part A and B and low-cost or free prescription drugs. There are approximately 120,000 people on Medicare in Montgomery. Less than 2,000 residents are enrolled in the drug assistance program. Approximately less than 3% of the Medicare population has a disability.

Leta Blank provides outreach in a variety of ways. She maintains a mailing list and sends a different topic of information each month. Materials sent to Montgomery County Public Libraries on a monthly basis and volunteers are set up in three regional libraries to provide assistance. Volunteers are also located at Independent Living Centers. Ms. Blank works with the University Of Maryland School Of Nursing and teaches a class every year on health insurance programs. More outreach is being done to churches and minority groups.

Ms. Blank would like to increase her outreach efforts and asked Commissioners for suggestions on how to reach more residents. It was suggested she contact organizations such as Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) and American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), as well as connect with local support groups for persons with disabilities, Human Resource Directors at large employers, district planners and social workers at hospitals, and MetroAccess. Commissioners also recommended that the SHIP website be added to Disability.gov's website. It is currently linked on the University of Maryland Extension website.

Volunteer orientation sessions are held monthly to recruit new counselors. Interested individuals can contact Ms. Blank at lblank@umd.edu. She will also send training updates to Betsy Luecking, Staff.

Mark Maxin, Commissioner, suggested forming a sub-committee that could work with Ms. Blank on an ongoing basis to address the issues of outreach.

Handouts and Information:

- [Senior Health Insurance Assistance Program \(SHIP\)](#)
- [Maryland Health Insurance Plan – Enrollment Application Form](#)
- [Facts About Medicare \(Part A and Part B\)](#)
- [SHIP: “Help! I Am Not Eligible for Medicare And I Need Health Insurance”](#)
- [SHIP “Health Insurance Options for Disabled Under 65 Years of Age”](#)
- [Income Support Programs – Eligibility Criteria for Selected Federal and State Programs](#)

Chair and Vice Chair Report:

Trish Gallalee, Chair, attended the Health & Human Services (HHS) Boards, Committee, and Commissions (BCC) Meeting on April 25th. An update on the budget was given. The State of Maryland made less severe cuts than originally anticipated for Fiscal Year 2012. The Federal Government is looking at potential cuts for the current fiscal year. HHS is working on a new business model that would include on technology to create a single point of entry for all services. The intake system would negate duplicate services. Funding is not currently available and HHS is working to find other resources. The County Attorney is scheduled to speak at the next HHS BCC meeting in June about BCC protocols and guidelines.

HealthyMontgomery.org is a new County website that is a one-stop source of population-based data and information about community health and the social and environmental determinants of health, such as socio-economic status, social isolation, housing, availability of healthy foods, and air quality, in Montgomery County and healthy communities in general.

Since July and August is summer recess for the Commission and no full Commission meetings will be held, Trish asked Commissioners to think about workgroup projects and goals that could be worked on during those months. Currently, there workgroup projects for Design for Life Montgomery, Schedule A Employment, and meetings on accessible parking.

Committee Reports:

Mark Maxin, Commissioner, reported that there is an upcoming employment meeting with Joe Adler, Director, Office of Human Resources, and Angela Washington, Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Manager, Office of Human Resources to discuss Schedule A hiring authority for persons with disabilities. The initiative was established by the Federal Government and allows for qualified candidates who meet the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) guidelines to be hired non-competitively. For a similar regulation to be instituted in Montgomery County, it would have to be put on a ballot and voted on by the public. The next opportunity would be in 2012. County Executive Isiah Leggett and County Councilmember Phil Andrews support the initiative. It has to be approved by the Charter Review Commission in order to be put on the ballot. They voted against putting it on the 2010 ballot. Mark Maxin, Commissioner, made a motion for a Committee to be established to work on this issue. Seth Morgan, Commissioner, seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

Seth Morgan, Commissioner, reported that last week the County Council presented a proclamation to the Montgomery County Coalition on End-Of-Life Care in support of National Healthcare Decisions Day. On April 7th, the Coalition hosted a free screening of a documentary film, "Consider the Conversation." The film includes interviews about end-of-life with patients, families, health care professionals, clergy and national experts. Seth can obtain a copy of the documentary to show Commissioners if they are interested. The video is not captioned.

New Business:

Betsy recently e-mailed Commissioners about expiring membership terms. Commissioners who are planning to resign or reapply must do so by submitting their letter of resignation or reapplication letter by including a cover letter and updated resume to the County Executive by May 27, 2011. Commissioners with questions can contact Betsy.

Action Item Review: None.

Announcements:

Joy Barrow, Chief, Medicaid & Senior Transportation, Division of Transit Services, Department of Transportation, reported on proposed transportation budget increases by County Executive Leggett:

- Increase to the Call 'N' Ride program of \$5.00 for the second book. The first book would remain \$5.25. The second book would increase to \$10.50.
- Increase of \$15 per month for the monthly Ride On Pass that will raise the cost to \$45.

Community Speaks: None.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Next Full Commission Meeting: Wednesday, June 8th, 2011 – Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, MD – Lobby Auditorium, 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Steering Committee Meeting: **RESCHEDULED** - Wednesday, June 29th, 2011 – 401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD – 1st Floor Tan Conference Room, 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Submitted by: Carly Clem, Office Services Coordinator
Betsy Luecking, Disability Policy Specialist